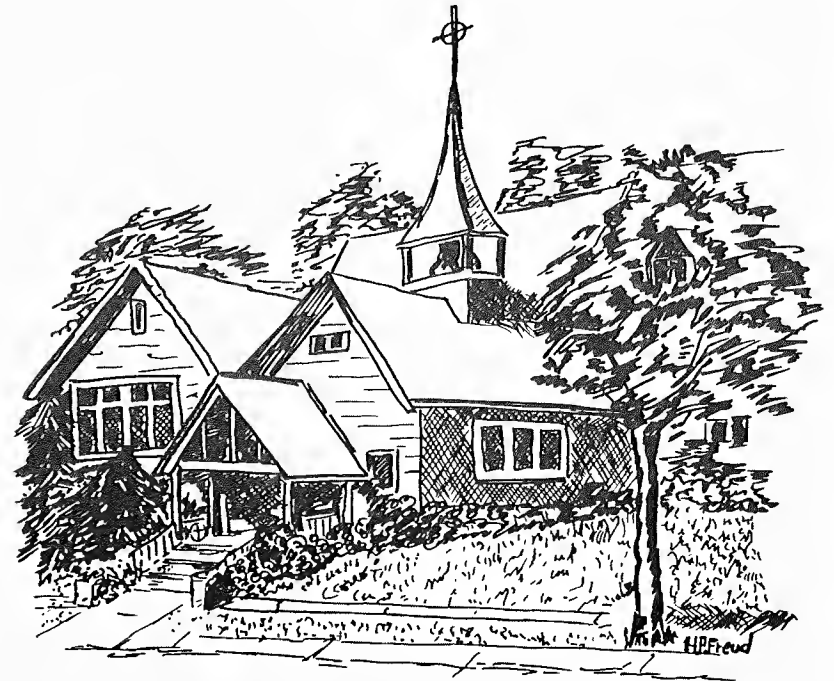


The Historical Trail 1982



THE FIRST UNITED METHODIST
CHURCH of ISLAND HEIGHTS, N.J.
Celebrating 100 Years of Ministry
1882 - 1982

The Historical Trail

Yearbook of the Historical Society of the
Southern New Jersey Annual Conference of the
United Methodist Church

FOREWORD

The feature article for this year's publication is written by the Reverend Walter Jesuncosky, III. Reverend Jesuncosky is the pastor of Bargaintown: Zion, and English Creek: Asbury, United Methodist Churches. His article reminds us of a movement that has long been neglected within our church. The article is entitled "Holiness Unto the Lord: The Holiness Movement in America and New Jersey Methodism."

Two church histories also appear in this issue. The First United Methodist Church of Island Heights celebrated its one hundredth anniversary this year. The history of the Island Heights Methodist Church was written by William O. King. In addition, another article informs us that Methodist preaching in Mt. Holly goes back to at least 1773. The late Elsie Cox wrote a very inclusive history of the First United Methodist Church in Mt. Holly. A brief summary of this history is included in this booklet.

Enjoy reading these articles. If you have written on any historical matters within our conference, I would be glad to hear from you.

DR. J. HILLMAN COFFEE
President, Editor

"HOLINESS UNTO THE LORD"
THE HOLINESS MOVEMENT IN AMERICAN AND
NEW JERSEY METHODISM

by
Rev. Walter Jesuncosky III

One of the most neglected and yet influential forces in American Methodism has been the Holiness Movement. It has touched literally millions of lives with its effects still being felt today. This article will attempt to explain the nature of the Holiness Movement by tracing it back to its historical and theological roots and then following it to the 20th century. Special emphasis will be given to the impact of the Holiness Movement on American and New Jersey Methodism which were integral parts of the plan to "spread scriptural holiness throughout the land." This is by no means to be considered an exhaustive work. Rather, it is hoped the reader will gain a greater appreciation for the influence of holiness on Methodism in New Jersey and the United States.

ORIGIN OF HOLINESS

When one thinks of the theology of holiness in the context of Methodism, John Wesley should immediately come to mind. Wesley made this doctrine one of the pillars of his biblical and theological understanding, naming it holiness, sanctification, Christian perfection, and perfect love. He made this statement concerning holiness:

But whom then do you mean by "one that is perfect"? We mean one in whom is "the mind which was in Christ" and who so "walketh as Christ also walked," a man "that hath clean hands and a pure heart," and serveth Him "with all his strength." He "loveth neighbor," every man, "as himself"; yea, "as Christ loveth us." Indeed, his soul is all love, filled with "bowels of mercies, kindness, meekness, gentleness, long suffering." And his life agreeth thereto, full of "the work of faith, the patience of hope, the labor of love." That is to be a perfect man, to be "sanctified throughout," even "to have a heart so all-flaming with the love of God," (to use Archbishop Usher's words) "as continually to offer up every thought, word; and work, as a spiritual sacrifice, acceptable to God through Christ."¹

Holiness theology finds its roots deep in the teachings of Wesley. He viewed sanctification as a definite second work of grace in the life of the believer, accomplished by faith through the action of the Holy Spirit. Wesley felt "this doctrine is the grand depositum which God has lodged with the people called Methodists; and for the sake of propagating this chiefly He appeared to have raised us up."²

Wesleyan theology teaches that in the new birth, the power of sin is broken. Though sin continues, it does not reign. Still there is a need for something more. Sin's presence requires "evangelical repentance" and further faith.³ This is where sanctification comes in. The believer receives forgiveness because of what Christ has done for us, but the second step emphasizes that we are made holy by what Christ through the Spirit does in us. This shows that in the Wesleyan realm grace means both pardon and power.⁴ Also, this sanctification is never a static thing. It is maintained moment by moment in a personal relationship between God and human beings.⁵

Wesley was convinced that the doctrine of holiness was responsible for the renewal God was working through his societies. There was some change in his understanding and presentation of sanctification over the years, but he always emphasized that the believer received the gift by faith.⁶ The doctrine of holiness came into greater prominence in the Methodist movement in 1760 when in a prayer meeting after a class meeting three who "complained of the burden they felt for the remains of indwelling sin . . ." believed God had fulfilled His word and "cleansed them from all unrighteousness." The next evening three more people made the same profession that God had cleansed, and the teaching of holiness began to spread.⁷ To this day, the doctrine of sanctification is still part of the Methodist theology. The *Discipline* of the United Methodist Church contains two statements on the doctrine, one out of the Methodist Protestant Church tradition and the other from the Evangelical United Brethren.⁸

One of the most important influences of the doctrine of holiness was its exposition by John Fletcher, John Wesley's hand picked successor as superintendent of the Methodist Societies. In his work *Checks to Antinomianism* he included a *Treatise on Christian Perfection*. His prestige, saintly character, and literary skill won him a great readership on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean in the century following his death.⁹ Fletcher shed new light on the doctrine of holiness. He brought out the idea that sanctification could be either instantaneous or gradual, a concept which would become a matter of controversy in

the Holiness Movement. "Sanctification is not generally the work of a day nor a year. For although God can cut short his work in righteousness . . . it is nevertheless in general a progressive work and of long duration."¹⁰ Yet, Fletcher adds, that to deny the possibility of instantaneous sanctification "is to deny (contrary to Scripture and matter of fact) that we can make an instantaneous act of faith in the sanctifying promise of the Father and in the all-cleansing blood of the Son and that God can seal that act by the instantaneous operation of His Spirit!"¹¹ One of Fletcher's greatest contributions to holiness thinking was his rejection of the attempt to make one particular method of sanctification the norm. He felt that Scripture did not clearly enunciate which was the only correct method and, therefore, left the doctrine open to more than one interpretation.¹² Fletcher also emphasized that the nature of Christian Perfection is cleansing from all sin, "from the guilt and defilement both actual and original corruption."¹³ Both Fletcher and Wesley, therefore, have been perhaps the two major contributors to the early holiness thought in Methodism, with the concepts of perfect love and cleansing in a believer's heart through the gift of God's grace.

HOLINESS TRANSPLANTED

The theology of holiness, though originating in England, came to the shores of America with the early Methodist preachers. The flamboyant Captain Thomas Webb preached holiness in America. Other preachers who emphasized this teaching were natives Freeborn Garretson, Robert Williams, and Devereux Jarratt.¹⁴ The father of American Methodism, Francis Asbury, preached the doctrine of Christian Perfection wherever he went. Asbury said he "felt much power while preaching on perfect love. The more I speak on this subject, the more my soul is filled and drawn out in love. The doctrine has a great tendency to prevent people from settling on their lees."¹⁵ Benjamin Abbott, known for his work in the Jerseys as a Methodist itinerant was reported in the minutes of the Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, 1796, to be "an uncommon zealot for the blessed work of sanctification and preached it on all occasions and in all congregations, and what was best of all, lived it!"¹⁶

As the Methodist movement in America found its expression in the form of the Methodist Episcopal Church, the preaching of holiness of heart and life spread during the Second Great Awakening. A number of preachers wrote to their bishop, primarily Asbury, about their

successes. William Mills of New Jersey wrote to report that sanctifications were being commonly experienced in the class meetings and that he was "now impressing the necessity of holiness of heart upon those that profess justifying grace."¹⁷ It seemed that holiness had a firm grasp upon Methodist thinking in America. This was not the case. Sanctification was not the primary doctrine taught during the first two decades of the Methodist Episcopal Church, though it was a respected doctrine. However, by the time of the War of 1812, holiness was becoming a neglected subject. Prior to 1812, the *Discipline* contained doctrinal tracts including Wesley's *Plain Account of Christian Perfection* and occasionally "of Christian Perfection." In the interest of size and convenience, the Conference of 1812 ordered all doctrinal tracts removed and bound in a separate volume and circulated. Unfortunately, it was not until 1832, twenty years later, that the volume appeared. This had the effect of removing, however inadvertently, official sanction for the doctrine of Christian Perfection.¹⁸ Later, Bishop J. T. Peck described these years as a period in which "the subject received less and less attention until, in many places, the publication and earnest enforcement of the old Wesleyan Bible doctrine of Holiness was in great danger of being regarded as a novelty, and an innovation, even in the Methodist Church."¹⁹

The decline of holiness preaching in Methodism was becoming so evident that in the Bishop's Address to Annual Conference in 1840, this warning was given:

We exhort and beseech you, brethren, by the tender mercies of God, that you strive for the "mind that was in Christ Jesus." Be not content with mere childhood in religion; but "... go on to perfection." The doctrine of entire sanctification constitutes a leading feature of original Methodism. But let us not suppose it enough to have this doctrine in our standards; let us labour to have the experience and the power of it in our hearts. Be assured, brethren, that if our influence and usefulness, as a religious community, depend upon one thing more than any other, it is upon our carrying out the great doctrine of sanctification in our life and conversation. When we fail to do this, then shall we lose our pre-eminence; and the halo of glory which surrounded the heads, and lit up the path of our sainted fathers, will have departed from their unworthy sons.²⁰

This address along with other important events marked the beginning of the time of greatness for the exponents of holiness.

THE GROWTH OF HOLINESS

The doctrine of Holiness began to gain ground in the theology of Methodism sometime in the 1830's. It was due certainly to a combination of factors. One of the reasons was the teaching and work of Adam Clarke. Though a citizen of Great Britain, Clarke became more and more prominent in American Methodism. Clarke was a balanced theologian; he did not dwell solely upon holiness. Yet, Clarke's treatment of Christian Perfection won him a reputation as a champion of the doctrine. In 1831, Clarke was invited to come to the United States on a tour of the Methodist Churches, but previous commitments prevented him. Clarke was especially known for his *Commentary on the Old and New Testament* which is still widely used today.²¹ Richard Watson, called "the first systematizer of theology of Methodism" was another champion of holiness. His work, *Theological Institutes*, dealt forcefully with Christian Perfection, and they soon won their place as an exposition of standard Methodist doctrine.²²

One of the most powerful forces behind the Holiness Movement began simply enough as a women's prayer meeting known as the "Tuesday Meeting for the Promotion of Holiness." This meeting began in 1835 as a joint prayer meeting attended by the women of the Allen Street and Mulberry Street Methodist Episcopal Churches in New York City. Its sponsors were Mrs. W. C. (Phoebe) Palmer and her sister, Mrs. Sarah Lankford, who after Phoebe's death in 1874 became the second Mrs. W. C. Palmer. Originally, only women attended the meetings, but after four years men were welcomed. The specific purpose of the meeting was to promote the doctrine of holiness. The meeting continued for sixty years and was still held primarily in the Palmer home.²³ Dr. W. C. Palmer was a well-known physician and even better known Christian layman. It was his wife Phoebe, though, who came into greater prominence. She and her husband taught a Bible class, spoke in evangelistic rallies, and printed hundreds of gospel tracts. Between 1845 and 1862, Phoebe Palmer published seven books on religious themes dealing with holiness in some form.²⁴ Over the years, thousands of Christians, laity and clergy, sat under her teaching. Even Bishops were counted among her friends and admirers. It was said that twenty-five thousand souls were saved through the efforts of Mrs. Palmer.²⁵ Though her ministry was to all denominations, she was a devoted Methodist and ranks among the greatest lay persons in Methodist history.

Another booster of holiness and great leader of Methodism was Nathan Bangs. He was a respected leader in the Methodist Episcopal Church for over half a century. Bangs was the founder of the denomination's periodical literature, the "Conference Course" in ministerial study, and the system of educational institutions in Methodism. In addition, Bangs was the first Missionary secretary and the first editor of *Quarterly Review*. Twice he turned down the episcopal chair when offered it by his brethren.²⁶ With such leadership it is no wonder that the emphasis upon the doctrine of Christian Perfection took hold of American Methodism.

This does not mean that the spread of scriptural holiness progressed as quickly as all holiness exponents desired. In 1860, a group of eighty laymen and fifteen ministers who had separated from the Methodist Episcopal Church, already split over the issue of slavery, met in Pekin, New York, to form a new church known as the Free Methodist Church. This fledgling denomination was to place particular emphasis upon entire sanctification.²⁷ The Free Methodist Church exists to this day and is one of the fastest growing denominations in the United States. Throughout the history of the holiness movement, the problem of division would prove to be a charge which was hard to escape, as we shall see.

THE MOVEMENT ORGANIZES

By the end of the Civil War, the cry for holiness was being raised from many quarters. Many people were interested in the propagation of the doctrine, but there was little in the way of organization for a concerted effort to reach the nation. In 1866, a group of Methodist preachers met weekly in New York City to consider ways of responding to the holiness need. One suggestion by a man named John A. Wood was that the camp meetings be organized as the ideal medium to restore spiritual life and promote holiness.²⁸ The idea was not a new one, since camp meetings had been around for years. In Southern New Jersey, camp meetings dated back to the 1820's. One camp meeting was held in 1827 at Carpenter's Landing (Mantua); another met in Paulsboro in 1834. In 1836, a "Woods Meeting" was held near Barnsboro. Other meetings were held in 1837 at Bethel (Hurffville), in 1838 at Fisler's grounds near Glassboro and again in the early 1840's in Barnsboro.²⁹ The camp meeting was not a novelty in either American nor New Jersey Methodism. As a matter of fact, the 1866 session of the New Jersey Conference adopted a resolution to establish a Conference Camp Meeting.

Resolved. That as preparation for our Centenary services, we hold, in some favorable period during the summer, a Conference camp meeting, to be held at some central point within the Conference bounds. That in carrying out the above resolution, the Presiding Elders, with two laymen from each district appointed by them, shall be a committee to make arrangements for the same."³⁰

With the same kind of camp meeting in mind, the New York Methodist Preachers' meeting took similar action. Its leader, Rev. John S. Inskip, an English born evangelist who was already coming into a place of prominence among the holiness advocates, called a special meeting. This meeting was held in June 1867 in Philadelphia and "arrangements were made for holding the first camp meeting ever held for the specific purpose of promoting the work of entire sanctification."³¹ A month later the two forces interested in promoting a New Jersey camp meeting crossed paths in Vineland, New Jersey. The group which met was called the National Association for the Promotion of Holiness. The efforts of the first two years of the Association were primarily to promote the New Jersey camp meeting, which had been mandated by Conference; but after two years, a permanent organization with a broader scope was established with John Inskip as its president. Other sponsors included Bishop L. L. Hamline, James Caughey, John Wood, and Alfred Cookman.³² The group, though strongly Methodist, was also interdenominational in character. The Association spread across the country drawing people from many different interests. Presbyterians like William E. Boardman and Baptists like A. B. Earle wrote on perfection.³³ The new president of Drew Theological Seminary (founded 1867), J. C. McClintock, and the man he appointed as professor of systematic theology, Randolph S. Foster, were committed to holiness. A number of bishops in the two branches of Episcopal Methodism were personally interested and active in the movement.³⁴ One influential layman, Washington C. DePauw, who gave much money and eventually his name to Indiana Asbury University, was the head of the National Publishing Association for the Promotion of Holiness.³⁵

In Southern New Jersey, holiness camps sprang up. Camps in Glassboro, Aura, and Erma promoted the doctrine, though they were not particularly Methodist in origin.³⁶ Yet, the New Jersey Conference had called for the establishing of a camp meeting for New Jersey Methodism. There has been some debate over the years as to which camp meeting this was. The two leading candidates are Pitman Grove and Ocean Grove. Pitman Grove (New Jersey Conference

Camp Meeting Association) started in the summer of 1871 by a group of ministers from the New Jersey Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church. According to some, this was the camp meeting established in response to the call of the Conference, as indicated by its name. Pitman Grove was located in what today is known as Pitman, in Gloucester County. It was named for the Reverend Charles Pitman (1796-1854), a faithful preacher in New Jersey and popular camp meeting speaker.³⁷

The Ocean Grove Camp Meeting has been a fortress of holiness since 1869. Originally, the camp was going to be located in Cape May County at Seven Mile Beach, but plans were quickly changed when mosquitoes (a Cape May County institution) drove them away. Finally, the camp meeting was located in Ocean Grove where it remains to this day. Ocean Grove was to be the sight of many great holiness meetings.³⁸

Much later in the life of the Holiness Movement, Delanco Camp Meeting was established in 1898. In its certificate of incorporation, it is recorded that "the objects for which the company is formed to hold religious meetings and gatherings for the salvation of souls and the promotion of Scriptural Holiness according to the doctrines and usages of the Methodist Episcopal Church."³⁹ Delanco Camp Meeting was originally located on the Delaware River about 12 miles north of Camden, but today is situated in the heart of the Pine Barrens in Burlington County. Over the years, Delanco has been closely related to Asbury College and Seminary in Wilmore, Kentucky. Also, each spring a "Deeper Life Conference" is held which usually deals with different aspects of holiness.⁴⁰

One other camp, which has had some measure of holiness teaching throughout the years is Malaga Camp Meeting (West Jersey Grove Camp Meeting Association) just outside of Vineland on Delsea Drive. Its first meeting was held in 1869, but it was not until 1873 that the land was purchased and the constitution drawn up.⁴¹ Malaga Camp Meeting has also been connected with Asbury College and Seminary as well as Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Philadelphia.

The work of holiness was rapidly spreading throughout New Jersey and the nation. L. R. Dunn of the Newark Conference wrote in 1873, "Never before was this privilege so clearly and extensively proclaimed. Never were there so many witnesses of its experience. Never were there so many of our ministers and people really groaning after perfect love."⁴² The Holiness Movement was reaching the zenith of its power. In 1884, it was partly responsible for the election of one

of its supporters, William Taylor, as missionary bishop.⁴³ In 1885, the first General Holiness Assembly met in the Park Avenue M.E. Church of Chicago, Illinois.⁴⁴ It was at this meeting that an official statement on the meeting of sanctification was issued by the National Holiness Association of America:

Entire Sanctification is a second definite work of grace wrought by the Baptism of the Holy Spirit in the heart of the believer subsequent to regeneration, received instantaneously by faith, by which the heart is cleansed from all corruption and filled with the perfect love of God.⁴⁵

This statement became the creed of the holiness movement and often the standard of orthodoxy.

In 1887, the national association could report it held sixty-seven national camp meetings and eleven tabernacle meetings which were distributed through sixteen states of the Union. Its representatives had carried the message of holiness to Canada, Germany, England, India, and Australia. By 1888, there were twenty-six state or local holiness associations, two in Canada, three national groups, and one claiming to be international. There was also a Young Peoples Methodist Alliance. Each week 201 holiness meetings were held with 206 holiness evangelists. In four years the number had grown to 304 evangelists and 354 meetings.⁴⁶ It seemed as though nothing could stop the spread of holiness over the land.

THE DECLINE OF THE MOVEMENT

During the 1880's, the Holiness Movement seemed to be perhaps the dominant force in American Methodism and possibly American Protestantism. Yet, at this time, the movement came under more frequent criticism. Formerly, the Holiness Movement was seen as a means of strengthening the denomination. However, as is often the case with renewal groups, some saw the movement as schismatic and disloyal. This was commonly called "come-outism." Unfortunately, this was countered by "push-outism."⁴⁷ Because there was increasing fear on the part of denominational leaders of this powerful group, so they were often pushed into leaving the denomination. To add to the confusion, Wesleyan theologians and holiness people were divided as to the nature of sanctification. Some insisted that it had to be entire and instantaneous while others were persuaded it was a progressive and gradual work. Toleration at both extremes was poor.⁴⁸

In the bishop's address to the General Conference of the M.E. Church, South, in 1894, the bishops affirmed the validity of Wesley's teaching on perfect love, but they were increasingly concerned with what they saw as abuses by holiness advocates.

We do not question the sincerity and zeal of these brethren; we desire the Church to profit by their earnest preaching and godly example; but we deplore their teaching and methods in so far as they claim a monopoly of the experience, practice, and advocacy of holiness, and separate themselves from the body of ministers and disciples.⁴⁹

The challenge had been made and confrontation was bound to come . . . and come it did.

This kind of head to head confrontation led to the separation of a large number of groups from the ranks of Episcopal Methodism. Organizations such as the Church of God (Anderson, Indiana) and the Pentecostal Holiness Church sprang up. The Church of the Nazarene was founded by Phineas F. Bresee, a prominent Methodist leader and Presiding Elder in California. Bresee was one of the many talented Methodist leaders who were compelled to withdraw from the mother church. The last decade of the 19th century and the first decade of the 20th century were the high point of "come-outism." Attitudes ran from "what a pity" to "good riddance!"⁵⁰

Another of the major forces in opposition to the Holiness Movement was the rise of liberal theology.⁵¹ It seemed that there "arose a generation who knew not Joseph" in the colleges and seminaries of Methodism. The doctrine was no longer taught there. The abuse of holiness by its more intolerant advocates had done irreparable damage. Its episcopal support had waned with the passing of Bishops Janes, Simpson, Peck, Foster, Hamline, and Haven.⁵²

In New Jersey, decline can be seen in the reports from Ocean Grove. In 1872, "multitudes were sanctified wholly and many sinners were born into the kingdom," and in 1878, "Nearly six hundred . . . in converting, sanctifying and reclaiming grace." Yet, by 1894, the report stated "several persons were at the altar and some were converted."⁵³ The fire of the Holiness Movement within Methodism was dying out. The fact of the matter is that by the year 1900 the greater part of the outspoken advocates of holiness had withdrawn or had been encouraged to leave the denomination. The Holiness Movement then entered a period of separation and sect formation.⁵⁴ The 1917 minutes of the Pitman Grove Camp Meeting record a sad postscript

to holiness in that camp: there was to be only one service per day for the promotion of holiness.⁵⁵

SOME CONCLUSIONS

What really happened to the Holiness Movement in Methodism? Why did it die? Certainly there is no single answer. Still, there are some possible suggestions. The Holiness Movement may very well have been a victim of its own success. Power often breeds corruption and intolerance. Many holiness people stretched the doctrine to the point of becoming pharisaic. Joy was removed from the Christian life and replaced by a list of dos and don'ts. Many people were just plain fed up with having holiness forced down their throats. Others were caught up in an anti-holiness hysteria which often took the form of witch hunts looking for schismatics. Perhaps there was a lack of balance in the Methodist schools which allowed the Wesleyan doctrine of sanctification to be pushed aside by the latest theological trends.

Hopefully, Methodism has learned from the mistakes made by both holiness advocates and critics. Just the same, holiness still lives. To this day there are many within and without the denomination who profess the gift. As long as the people called Methodists still cling to their Wesleyan heritage, the truth of holiness will live. The task of Wesley's heirs remains "to spread Scriptural Holiness throughout the land."

NOTES

1. John Welsey, *The Works of John Wesley* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1978), XI, 384.
2. *Ibid.*, XIII, 9.
3. Robert E. Chiles, *Theological Transition in American Methodism: 1790-1935* (New York: Abingdon, 1965), p. 156.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 155.
5. *Ibid.*, pp. 156-157.
6. Collin Williams, *John Wesley's Theology Today* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1960), pp. 170-171.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 171.
8. *The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church, 1980* (Nashville: The United Methodist Publishing House, 1980), pp. 62, 66.
9. John Leland Peters, *Christian Perfection and American Methodism* (New York: Abingdon, 1956), p. 71.
10. *Ibid.*, p. 75.
11. *Ibid.*, p. 77.
12. *Ibid.*, p. 77.
13. *Ibid.*, p. 78.

14. *Ibid.*, p. 82-83.
15. *Ibid.*, p. 85.
16. *Ibid.*, p. 94.
17. *Ibid.*, p. 96.
18. *Ibid.*, pp. 97-98.
19. *Ibid.*, p. 101.
20. *Ibid.*, p. 101.
21. *Ibid.*, pp. 103-104.
22. *Ibid.*, p. 107.
23. *Ibid.*, p. 110.
24. *Ibid.*, p. 110.
25. *Ibid.*, p. 111.
26. *Ibid.*, p. 114.
27. *Ibid.*, p. 129.
28. *Ibid.*, p. 134.
29. Robert Crowther, *Methodist Camp Meetings in Southern New Jersey* (Princeton: 1959), this is an unpublished thesis paper with unnumbered pages.
30. W. E. Perry, *Origin and History of the New Jersey Conference Camp Meeting* (Camden, N.J.: Barclay and Cheeseman), p. 1.
31. Peters, p. 134.
32. *Ibid.*, p. 134.
33. Frederick A. Norwood, *The Story of American Methodism* (New York: Abingdon, 1974), p. 298.
34. *Ibid.*, p. 298.
35. *Ibid.*, p. 298.
36. Crowther.
37. *New Jersey Conference Camp Meeting Association 100 Year Anniversary 1870-1970*. This is an anniversary booklet.
38. Crowther.
39. *Ibid.*
40. *Ibid.*
41. *Ibid.*
42. Peters, p. 135.
43. Norwood, p. 298.
44. *Ibid.*, p. 298.
45. Peters, p. 162.
46. *Ibid.*, p. 138.
47. Norwood, p. 298.
48. *Ibid.*, pp. 298-299.
49. Peters, p. 148.
50. Norwood, p. 300.
51. Chiles, p. 69.
52. Peters, p. 178.
53. *Ibid.*, p. 178.
54. *Ibid.*, p. 150.
55. Crowther.

HISTORY OF METHODISM IN MT. HOLLY

1773 - 1975

1773 - 1833

Although the year 1773 has been accepted as the time for the beginning of Methodism in Mount Holly, there is no written record to establish this date. It seems to have been taken from the tablet on the present church, evidently removed from an earlier building. However, the present pastor, (1969) Dr. J. Hillman Coffee, through his study of the Reverend Joseph Pilmore's Journal, has found a clue. The Reverend Pilmore and the Reverend Richard Boardman were the first missionaries sent to America by John Wesley, landing in Gloucester in October 1769. Under date of October 12, 1773, Pilmore wrote:

"On Tuesday I went into the country to preach at Mount Holly where Mr. David Brainerd formerly preached. We had a fine congregation of different denominations in the Presbyterian Meeting, and deep seriousness sat upon every face while I explained and enforced these words of our Lord: Be ye therefore ready. When the sermon was over, Mr. Williams gave an exhortation."

There is no record of the formation of a society or classes.

The best source of the early history of Methodism in Mount Holly is found in the minutes of the Quarterly Conference meeting in 1857, written by Clayton Monroe. All of the historical facts given in succeeding histories and summaries were taken verbatim from this material.

As early as 1776, the Reverend George Shadford, one of Wesley's itinerants, preached here on two occasions in the Presbyterian Church of which the Reverend John Brainerd was the pastor. The Methodists did not have a church edifice until 1810. Shortly after the Reverend Shadford, the greatest of all the early preachers, Bishop Asbury arrived May 2, 1776; the Bishop records in his journal: "Some melted under the word at Mount Holly."

In the year 1781, Mount Holly became a part of the West Jersey circuit, including about one half of the territory of the state. Caleb Pedecord and Joseph Cromwell were appointed ministers, and both preached here occasionally. "The Reverend Thomas Ware was awakened by Pedecord and was extensively known as an efficient Methodist Minister."

Eight years later Mount Holly was in the Trenton Circuit under the preachers the Reverend Cooper and the Reverend Nathaniel B. Mills. The Reverend Cooper wrote of Mount Holly in June 23, 1787:

"I met the class at 6 o'clock and preached at about 8 o'clock."

In 1789, Mount Holly became attached to the Burlington Circuit, with John McCloskey and William Jackson as preachers. From then until 1797, there was a succession of ministers in charge of the circuit, thirteen in all. During this time a small society was formed and regular worship maintained by occasional visits of the preachers in charge and the labor of two local preachers named Daniel Jones and John Walker. Jones died, and Walker was removed to enter the itinerancy. Some members died and some moved away until the little society dwindled to the membership of two persons: Mrs. Mary Monroe and a black woman named Drisella Miller. Mrs. Monroe was the mother of Clayton Monroe who wrote the 1857 history of Mount Holly Methodism.

In 1794, there appeared to have been no society in Mount Holly, for a Mrs. McGowan (converted in Dublin, Ireland) became a resident of the town. Finding no Methodist society, she united with the Baptist church and remained until the Methodist Society was reorganized.

It is interesting to note in the light of the decline of the earliest society that Mount Holly contributed two of its first members to the itinerancy: Thomas Ware and John Walker. Two others were related to the cause, one the wife of an itinerant and the other the wife of a most prominent layman.

In 1785, John Walker, "a name precious to many New Jersey Methodists," united with the group in Mount Holly. He lived until 1849 and was for years "a venerated father in our ministry."

Miss Rebecca Budd joined the society in 1789, which was near the beginning of this group. She became the wife of James Sterling, and Mary Lees, another member of the early class, married the Reverend John Walker.

According to the same source, Ezekiel Cooper, born in Caroline County, Maryland, on February 22, 1768, was present at the meeting of Bishop Coke and Bishop Asbury, and he received the sacrament of the Lord's supper. Bishop Asbury persuaded him to enter the itinerancy. He traveled the East Jersey circuit prior to being assigned to the Trenton circuit which was then a part of the Baltimore

Conference. The Reverend Ezekiel Cooper was considered one of the most powerful logicians in his day.

In 1805, John Wesley Sterling and the Reverend Gamaliel Bailey, a local preacher who had been in the itinerancy, became residents of Mount Holly. A new interest was awakened, and a class was formed with Sterling as the leader. This, Clayton Monroe calls the Second Rise of Methodism in Mount Holly.

Bailey held preaching services on Sunday, and the preachers of the Burlington Circuit made Mount Holly one of their regular appointments for a service once in two weeks on a week day evening.

One of the earliest places of meeting was Towne House over the Market, which according to the Reverend Atkinson "was made the scene of gracious displays of the Divine Mercy." The first Market House, built in 1747, stood at the intersection of Main and Mill Streets. A larger structure was erected later with a frame part of two stories high in which meetings were held. This probably is the Towne House mentioned as a place of worship.

According to Mr. Shinn, the Methodists also held services in the Friends Meeting House on Mill Street and, in pleasant weather, on the mount. This Friends Meeting House was on the property of John Woolman in the rear. The entrance was known as Meeting House Lane. A plaque on the abandoned Acme building located on Mill Street marks the site of the Woolman property. Now it is occupied by the Child and Family Development Center.

Methodist meetings were held in an old schoolhouse according to the 1857 history by Monroe. This building located back of Main Street was found to be inadequate by the summer of 1809. The Reverend Joseph Tottem, Presiding Elder of the New Jersey District, held a Quarterly Meeting here, and great numbers of people stood in the yard unable to enter. The Elder preached standing in the doorway.

He, therefore, urged the erection of a place of meeting large enough to accommodate the growing society. After the formation of a Board of Trustees, two of them, William N. Shinn and Samuel Risdon, were appointed a building committee. In 1810, a brick building 36 feet square was erected on a lot at the corner of Main and Brainerd (New Street) Streets. The church stood on the present site of the Weber residence (No. 2 Brainerd). The original deed for this plot of ground is still in the possession of the church.

When the congregation again outgrew its place of meeting in 1839, James D. Shreve purchased the first church and rented it for meetings and entertainments. It survived until 1865 when it was torn down,

leaving room for the moving back of the residence mentioned above. This was done that the Masonic Temple might be built on its site.

1833 - 1883

In 1833, Mount Holly Methodist Church became a station with James Buckley the first assigned preacher. The charge embraced Lumberton, Medford, and Columbus. There was great growth and prosperity during his pastorate. His yearly salary was one hundred dollars plus board and expenses for travel to and from connecting appointments.

The Methodist group had acquired by purchase the lot on which the Presbyterian church stood in which some of the early Methodists preached. A lot adjoining the church building was fitted for accommodations of country friends with their carriages.

During the pastorate of Reverend John L. Lenhart (1837-1839), a second church was erected on the opposite side of the street from the first one on the lot just described. The cornerstone was laid July 14, 1839, and dedicated to the worship of God in 1840 by the Reverend Charles Pitman. This is the same preacher for whom Pitman, New Jersey, was named. An extensive revival of religion followed the dedication of this second church.

The minutes reported to the conference that the membership now totaled two hundred, including Rancocas, which had nineteen members. This total included probationers. Rancocas was a part of the Mount Holly charge until 1858, when it was transferred to the Lumberton circuit.

Perusal of the Quarterly Conference minutes brought to light some phases of life in the early church.

The members took care of their own. At every meeting there was a report on the expenditures of the "Poor Fund." Some needy members received a regular allotment of a few dollars.

Disputes between the brethren were submitted to an arbitration committee from the society which reported to the Quarterly Conference. There are at least two cases in which one of the disputants appealed the decision, asking for a second arbitration committee.

In 1848, on motion it was resolved that it is "inconsistent with the interests of religion to attend places of public amusement, such as plays, the circus, ball games, etc."

An interesting resolution was spread on the minutes of 1859:

"That the practice of seating men and women apart from each other is a practice unnecessary and unexpedient and we recommend our Trustees to discontinue the practice."

A library was established within each Sunday School. In 1845, it was reported to the Quarterly Conference that there were 320 volumes in the collection at Mount Holly. There are several references to the need for supplying more books and plans made to set aside money for this purpose. There was apparently a complaint concerning the choice of books, for a committee was appointed in 1852 to look into the matter. It reported finding "nothing exceptional."

A reader of the minutes of so long ago could not help being impressed by the missionary zeal and evangelistic fervor of the leaders of the Mount Holly Church. This was demonstrated in two ways: by their concern for the Sabbath Schools under their jurisdiction (four in 1850) and by their promotion of the establishment of new schools and churches.

Committees were appointed to visit the schools to ascertain whether or not the discipline was being followed and the catechism taught. Emphasis was placed on the fact that the schools' primary purpose was to lead to the conversion of the scholars. There were repeated calls for more male teachers, and in one place it was noted the members of one class were more faithful in attendance than their male teacher.

A resolution was passed to direct all members to send their children to Sabbath School and for the parents to follow it up by ascertaining if the children went where they were sent.

There were monthly prayer meetings of Sunday School officers and teachers.

In 1862, the minutes record the loss of several of the most efficient teachers who had left for the war and that classes had to be assigned to some of the older scholars.

There was great concern that the students should be mission-minded. One pastor was reminded to preach a sermon on missions. A plan was devised for each scholar to give a penny per week for missionary work. In 1862, the Sunday School Missionary collection "was only exceeded in the past year in its contribution by one other in the whole Conference."

A recommendation for success in the Sabbath School was made in 1863 which might apply in any year:

"More labour, more zeal, more prayers will make the school flourish more."

Another interesting item gleaned from the Quarterly Conference minutes was that the Annual Conference was held in Mount Holly in 1845.

Under date of April 30, 1866, of the minutes of Leaders and Stewards it was revealed that a recent effort to raise the deficiency in the Preacher's salary had failed. There was a proposal that "sittings" in the church might be rented to those who were willing to pay "for the same."

It was decided in June 1866 to discharge a committee "familiarly known as the Slander Committee since it seemed no longer needed—the practice of slandering the officials and other members gave evidence of being cured."

In the Quarterly Conference of July 16, 1866, the pastor recorded an apparent "want" of interest in the Sunday School on the part of the church at large. He felt that this attitude was to be regretted and that the opposite feeling should be encouraged.

On September 16, 1867, the Minister stated that classes were better attended and the piety of members improved "for which we thank God but I know much more we need of Faith, Prayer, and Holiness."

With the arrival of Reverend William Franklin in March 1867, a number of matters were brought to the attention of the Leaders and Stewards.

The poor singing had impressed the Reverend Franklin, and he suggested that Professor Philip Phillips be invited to come to give one of his concerts. Following this, meetings of the church and congregation were planned for the practice of singing.

There were discussions concerning the poor attendance at class meetings. The Leaders expressed the opinion that some members were deterred from coming for fear of being called upon. The Pastor assumed the responsibility of telling the leaders to inform the people that they were welcome even if they could not speak, for in his judgment "Leaders may not require those to speak who have nothing to say."

During the June meeting of the Leaders and Stewards, a committee of women was appointed "to visit the parsonage kitchen and ascertain what repairs are needed to make it a pleasant and suitable place for doing the work of the house." This committee became known as the Ladies Pastor's Aid Society, later simply Ladies Aid, later still as

Woman's Society of Christian Service. The final changes were Women's Society of Christian Service and in 1973, The United Methodist Women. Under the date of November 23, 1871, the recently organized Ladies Pastor's Aid Society, after the town had been districted for the collection of assessments, had had work assigned "to those who would, engage in rescuing the perishing."

Still another concern of the Reverend Franklin was the need of extending courtesy to strangers who might come to the church on the Sabbath. The outcome of this was that the Trustees appointed two men to attend to the seating. This seems to be the beginning of the system of ushers.

During the Quarterly Conference of September 1867, a committee to superintend the erection of a new church at Clineville (Smithville) recommended the sale of the old building. The following February the committee reported that the building had been completed and that the needed money had been provided with the exception of about \$225. After the dedication there was a revival, resulting in thirty joining the church "and others seeking."

Over and over the problems of the church are discussed—the same problems that face the church today: lack of interest, low spirituality, declining attendance in the summer, too few dedicated teachers in the Sunday School, low attendance at prayer meetings, and financial problems.

In the spring of 1870, there was a new method of gathering funds for the maintenance of the church. Instead of the class leaders making the collections and reporting to the meetings of the Leaders and Stewards, the parish was divided into districts and collectors were appointed to make monthly collections of assessments made by the Official Board.

The envelope plan was put into operation in the spring of 1876.

The Quarterly Conference of September 13, 1872, formed a committee to report on the matter of starting a new church building. They were spurred on by the will of William N. Shinn who, dying in 1871, had left money for his share of the cost.

From this time on there are reports of investigations of sites for the new church. The need was for a property large enough to accommodate a parsonage, a church, and a sexton's house. The plan was to sell the church of 1840 and the rest of the property. All available lots were deemed too expensive.

There seems to be no account of the decision to tear down the church and erect the new one in its place. However, there is a record

of an agreement for the rental of the Opera House for the Sabbath Services during the process of building the new church at the rental of \$6 per Sunday.

1883 -1975

The present edifice was built during the pastorate of Reverend Ananias Lawrence on the site of the second church. The cornerstone was laid July 9, 1883, by Bishop William L. Harris and dedicated by Bishop Isaac W. Wiley, May 25, 1884. The cost at the time of its dedication was \$40,211.95.

Prior to the tearing down of the old building a large sum of money had been raised, and at the dedication the members and friends subscribed the balance needed to pay fully for the new building in ten years.

Many pledges were paid in full, but others were not. In 1907, it seemed possible that in three years the church would be free of debt. Necessary repairs, improvements and a new heating plant prevented the cancellation of the notes.

During the Reverend John Goorley's pastorate (1921-1923) the debt was reduced to \$2,890. In spite of the fact that the interior was renovated at the cost of \$7,310 the total indebtedness was cancelled. This was the first time since 1810 that the church had been free from debt. The one hundred fiftieth anniversary of the establishment of Methodism in Mount Holly was celebrated in November 1923.

Although paying the debt on the third church was of paramount interest, there are some other matters transpiring during this period to be noted.

The bell which had been given by the Trinity Episcopal Church "was put up with appropriate services" during the pastorate of Reverend Marshall Owens (1899-1900).

Individual Communion Service was introduced in the autumn of 1912. It was provided by the Ushers Union.

In notes from the 1921 records, an electric motor is mentioned as being desirable for the organ.

Four trees donated by Doctor Charles Harker were planted in front of the church on June 4, 1923. They were memorials to John H. Dobbins, Reverend John Goorley, DeMaris Huff, and Hannah Bullock. The names were carved on the curbstones.

The Klu Klux Klan was given permission to attend services in 1924, provided the members came without masks and/or robes.

In June 1929, there was a proposal that a Daily Vacation Bible School be held.

Mention was made of plans for a community sponsored Billy Sunday Revival in 1930. There seems to be nothing definite in the following minutes, but the Methodists cooperated in this undertaking.

Following renovations, the church was soon in financial trouble. In 1929, there was a record of unpaid interest on notes in the bank. One thousand dollars was budgeted in 1930 for yearly interest on the debt. Special offerings were requested; church suppers were frequent; notes were sent to delinquents and personal visits made; contributions of pennies were asked—a mile wanted or \$844.80. Legacies from estates were used to pay on the notes.

In spite of this effort, the church by June 1933, was in more serious financial difficulty. Benevolent Fund money had to be put in the current expense account in 1939 and 1940.

The huge debt, almost as much as the original cost of the building, came during the great depression. In the memory of members still living, the times were heart-breaking. Since they were unable to pay the interest, in spite of all their hard work, they expected to see the church doors closed forever.

On April 10, 1933, Reverend Alfonso Dare, Reverend Decker's successor, authorized the observance of the one hundredth anniversary of Mount Holly as a station and the fiftieth anniversary of the erection of the present church.

Under the leadership of the Reverend Dare, the congregation reopened a church at Magnolia. Mr. Mark Reynolds, a prominent layman, assisted in conducting the Sunday evening services. Later, his father, the Reverend George Reynolds, became the minister there.

A decision was made on May 8, 1933, to join other churches in holding union services during the summer on the lawn of the Friends Meeting House, Main and Garden Streets, in Mount Holly.

Baccalaureate Services for the High School Graduates, sponsored by the Council of Churches, started in 1939. The Methodist Church was the host because it had the largest seating capacity.

The recurring problem of parking in the church yard began in 1936.

From November 9 to 16, 1940, plans were made to commemorate the one hundred thirtieth anniversary of the erection of the first church in 1810. There was an Anniversary celebration again in 1943.

There are notes from 1942 concerning the loss to the church of young men going to World War II. Difficulty in getting coal because

of the war caused the church building to be closed except for Sunday services.

In the record for 1944, mention is made of the money, \$2,000, left by the will of Mrs. William B. Pearson for an elevator. It was not until March 1956, that work on the installation was ordered by the Official Board to begin. The entire cost was about \$9,000.

When the Reverend George T. Hillman retired from the active ministry in 1945, his last year with the Mount Holly Church, Mrs. Verna Hillman gave money for a new pulpit in honor of her husband.

Shortly after the Reverend Hillman's departure, his successor, the Reverend Paul C. Greiner, announced that final payment had been made on the debt incurred during the pastorate of the Reverend B. Harrison Decker. The note burning ceremony took place on Sunday, September 15, 1946, with Bishop Ernest Richardson assisting. This was also the one hundred seventy-third Anniversary of the first presentation of the Methodist faith to Mount Holly listeners.

Over the years the church has commemorated the establishment of Methodism in Mount Holly. Sometimes the date 1773 has been used; sometimes the date of the erection of the first church building in 1810; sometimes the year 1833, when Mount Holly became a station; sometimes the anniversary of the erection of the present church in 1883. At times only a short period elapses between the celebrations. The latest was in October 1973, or the two hundredth year since Reverend Joseph Pilmore came to Mount Holly.

Many changes and renovations have taken place during the years. In 1954, partitions in the Sunday School room were installed in order to make more accommodations for classes. The sub-basement was excavated and made usable as a Primary Room for the Sunday School.

References often occur concerning repairs and improvements inside and out. The funds were furnished by the organized classes and individuals, who frequently gave them as memorials. The last large expenditure was the replacement of the slate roof with an asphalt shingle one in 1973, during Doctor J. Hillman Coffee's pastorate.

According to the records, the Sabbath School was organized in 1825, but there are no further reports prior to the year 1859; hence much which might be of interest is lost. Since that date an uninterrupted record has been kept. Over the years about four hundred persons have been enrolled as officers and teachers.

A few of Mr. Dobbins' comments are pertinent. He noted with great satisfaction that the membership of the church was made up very largely from the list of scholars.

To Mr. Dobbins the most interesting and important fact was that the best revivals of religion initiated in the Sabbath School.

Over the forty-three years, more than \$10,000 was contributed to missions. Thirteen scholars became ministers of the gospel and "have filled a large place in the evangelism of our beloved Methodism."

The church buildings have grown in size and beauty since 1810. The present edifice inspires the congregation to the worship and the service of God. The membership has grown from the tiny society of the eighteenth century, to the present total of 549. In spirit, Mount Holly Methodism is still loyal to the principles of its founder John Wesley.

HISTORY OF THE METHODIST CHURCH IN ISLAND HEIGHTS

by
William A. King

The history of the Methodist Church of Island Heights is so interwoven with that of the town that it is necessary to go back a number of years before the church came into existence and get a glimpse of the beginnings of things on the island.

The Rev. Jacob B. Graw, an important member of the New Jersey Annual Conference, was instrumental in the formation of the Island Heights Association. Mr. Graw was president and associated with him were the Rev. Samuel Van Sant as treasurer and the Rev. George K. Morris as secretary. There were also a number of ministers of the New Jersey Conference as well as several laymen—prominent businessmen of Philadelphia, Camden, Trenton, Mount Holly and Toms River—who helped with the founding of Island Heights.

The attention of these men was drawn to the Island as a suitable place for camp meeting purposes and a seaside resort. There were 172 acres in the original tract. The above-mentioned men negotiated with the owners of the property and purchased it on July 1, 1878, in the name of the Island Heights Association. In addition to Mr. Graw, Mr. Van Sant, and Mr. George K. Morris, some of the following men were original members of the Association: C. E. Hendrickson, James G. Gowdy, W. W. Moffet, John Simpson, C. K. Morris, George L. Dobbins, Joshua Jeffries, Ananias Lawrence, G. B. Reed, G. H. Neal, and J. M. Cassidy. These men purchased shares of \$50 each until a capital of \$9,000 was raised.

After the purchase of the property, improvements were needed; and the Association offered lots for sale to individuals who might be interested in locating in Island Heights. Prices of lots were from \$39 to \$390 per lot. The sale brought in \$10,000, all of which went for improvements such as the clearing of underbrush, building two avenues, building a pavilion and a wharf to dock the boats that were to take visitors to and from Toms River to attend the camp meetings.

After much work, the Camp Meeting was opened in 1879. On camp meeting nights, worshippers numbering from 1,500 to 2,000 could be seen around the large meeting hall, which was a crude building with a roof and no sides.

Since by 1880, Island Heights still did not have a church of its own, Elder Van Sant placed Island Heights under the pastoral care of George C. Stanger, pastor of the Toms River Methodist Church. Stanger preached here once a month, while the Rev. John Simpson, Superintendent of the Association, supervised the intervening Sundays. Early church services were held in various places, according to the description of Miss Emma Simpson, daughter of John Simpson. She says, "Rev. William Stockton took his great gospel tent to Island Heights. . . . The regular services of the church were first conducted in the Island Heights (the hotel), then later transferred to the Mathis Building on Central Avenue, and again returned to the basement of the Island House."

These temporary arrangements continued until March of 1882, when the Annual Conference placed Island Heights on a circuit with Cedar Grove with John Simpson in charge as pastor. This lasted but three months when the Conference, on June 29, 1882, placed Island Heights on a circuit with Bayville and Whiting, with Mr. Simpson continuing as pastor. Cedar Grove was no longer part of the circuit. At the next Annual Conference, Island Heights became a separate charge with J. E. Sawn appointed pastor. In 1883, Cedar Grove was again added to Island Heights, making a circuit. This arrangement continued until the spring of 1890, when Island Heights again became a separate charge with a membership of 43. Cedar Grove was added and dropped a number of times during the course of our history. Today, Cedar Grove is not on a circuit with Island Heights.

By 1882, lots on the corner of Van Sant and Simpson Avenues had been donated to the members of the Methodist Church. A small structure which had been used for religious services on the Camp Meeting Square was secured by the church, moved to new lots, renovated, and became the nucleus of the first Methodist Church

building in Island Heights. This temporary building was used as a church until enough money could be raised to build a real church. The cornerstone for the First Methodist Church of Island Heights was laid at the above location on August 29, 1882. The ceremonies were conducted by J. B. Graw, assisted by A. Lawrence, S. Thackara, J. O'Hara, and John Simpson. The completed church was dedicated on August 17, 1884. It was a building thirty by fifty feet, surmounted by a cupola room, seating one hundred. During the pastorate of H. Moore Blake, the Epworth League raised money to install electric lights in the church.

During the pastorate of A. C. Oliver, Jr., two lots on Ocean Avenue were purchased for a new church and parsonage at a cost of \$600. Up to this time, a parsonage had been rented for the ministers and their families. Under the direction of Rev. Oliver, a parsonage was built on Ocean Avenue to serve 25 ministers and their families. Rev. Oliver also started work in Ocean Gate, which was placed on a circuit with Island Heights from 1911 through 1913 before it joined with Bayville.

The church at Simpson and Van Sant Avenues served the congregation until 1925 when the present structure was erected on the corner of Ocean and Simpson Avenues. According to long-time resident, Mabel Muller, the original church building was purchased by Tom Wallace, who razed it and used the beams for rafters in a house he built, the present Steer house on Ocean Avenue. The lots at the corner of Van Sant and Simpson Avenues, where the original 1882 church stood, have changed hands several times since 1925. In the 1960's, the lots were again purchased by the church to serve as a parking lot.

In the fall of 1953, Roland Strang began what was to be the longest pastorate up to that time—six years. His full-time ministry enabled the church to solidify its program and become an effective witness to the Lord, Jesus Christ.

In 1961, under the pastorate of Donald L. Holt, many active laymen launched the church into a building program which resulted in the erection of our present parsonage, a seven-room colonial home, which was built on the site of the former parsonage after it had been torn down.

Three major and much-needed changes occurred in the church building during the 1970's pastorate of James Biggs. The old kitchen was torn out and new, modern facilities installed. This work was done through tireless labor and generosity of the women of the church,

who raised several thousand dollars for the project. Fellowship Hall was redecorated, paneled, and a fire exit built from the rear of the hall. A growing membership required the use of additional space, and a large room at the rear of the sanctuary was partitioned to serve as Church School rooms and an office for the pastor. A garage for the parsonage was built during these years.

Plans for the future include a ramp leading from the driveway area into the sanctuary to allow handicapped persons easy access to the church.

We are proud of this church. It is beautiful and well equipped as a house of worship. It came to us as a monument to the untiring efforts and generosity of past church people. Our present church building is a copy of a church in the New England States. The Rev. Alfonso Dare, a summer resident persuaded Charles K. Haddon, another summer resident and one very instrumental in the erection of the new church, to visit New England. When Mr. Haddon saw the church there, he admired it so much that it was his desire to have it duplicated here. We are most grateful to those two men and to the members and friends of the church who have maintained it through the years.

THE HISTORICAL TRAIL

INDEX

1973 - 1982

Author	Title	Book
Coffee, J. Hillman	"Captain Webb (1724-1796)"	1975
	"A Valuable Source for History"	1981
Coffee, Miriam L.	"The Origin of the Sunday Schools in England and in America"	1980
Cox, Elsie	"History of Methodism in Mt. Holly: 1773-1975"	1982
D'Autrechy, Phyllis B.	"An Historical and Genealogical Record of the First United Methodist Church of Pennington (1774-1974)"	1978
Green, Charles A.	"Samuel Sebastian: Last of the Great Wesleys"	1975

Griscom, Lloyd	"The Methodist Church and the American Revolution: The Rise of Methodism in America"	1976
Jesuncosky, Walter III	"Holiness Unto the Lord: The Holiness Movement in American and New Jersey Methodism"	1982
Johnson, Emily	"Rev. Thomas Ware," John (Earley) Early," "James Sterling," "Thomas Morrell"	1976
King, William A.	"History of the Methodist Church in Island Heights"	1982
Kingston, William, Jr.	"Charles Pitman: New Jersey Apostle" Part II	1973
	"Charles Pitman: New Jersey Apostle" Part III	1974
	"A Brief Account of the Holy Club at Oxford on the 251st Anniversary of Its Founding"	1980
Licorish, Joshua	"Harry Hoosier, African Pioneer Preacher"	1977
Lyght, Ernest S.	"Charles A. Tindley: Methodist Preacher"	1979
Molyneaux, Edna M.	"British Methodism"	1978
Moore, Penny	"Memories of Children's Day"	1980
Ness, John	"John Wesley"	1973
Perkins, F. Elwood	"They Love to Sing: South Jersey's Heritage in Hymns and Gospel Songs"	1974
	"The Cape May Commission Meeting in 1876 as Reported in a Local Newspaper"	1976
Rowe, Kenneth E.	"The Spirit of Cape May: Reflections on the Centennial of the Cape May Conference on American Methodist Union, 1876"	1977
Sayre, Charles A.	"John Wesley Today"	1975
Scull, Kenneth N.	"Catawba Church"	1973

Shippo, Howard F.	"War Time Evangelism: An Effective Witness During the Revolution—A Chapter from the Life of Benjamin Abbott"	1978
Smyth, Charles	"The Reverend John Knox Shaw"	1977
Stanger, Frank B.	"The Reopening of John Wesley's City Road Chapel: A Call for Methodist Renewal"	1979
Steelman, Robert B.	"United Methodist Heritage Tour of England"	1973
	"Captain Thomas Webb: Founder of Methodism in New Jersey"	1976
	"Did You Know?"	1978
	"Methodist Protestants, a 150 Year Legacy in Southern New Jersey"	1979
	"Charter Members of the New Jersey Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church"	1980
	"Old First United Methodist Church, West Long Branch"	1981
	"An Excerpt from the <i>Journal</i> of the Reverend Freeborn Garrettson"	1981
Stockton, William	"The Reopening of John Wesley's City Road Chapel"	1979
Williams, Robert J.	"Social Thought in the New Jersey Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church: 1929-1941"	1980
	"The Civil War and New Jersey Methodists"	1981

The index for articles before 1973 is in the copy of *The Historical Trail*, 1972.

HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWS

This is an exciting time to be involved in the work of history in United Methodism and in New Jersey. Our sister Conference, the Northern New Jersey, is celebrating its 125th Anniversary this year and publishing an Anniversary Booklet. Later this year, the United Methodist Archives Center will be opening at Drew University putting this outstanding collection close to us.

The Bicentennial of our Denomination will be celebrated in 1984, and your church should be making plans for its celebration. Then in 1986, the Sesquicentennial of our Conference will be observed. A new and comprehensive history of the Conference will be written for that occasion.

How can you help? You can see that your Church History is up to date. Inventory the records of your church, including minute books, treasurer's records, and the like, and see that they are safely stored for preservation and future use.

Look around and see if there are records that should be in the Conference Archives. Much valuable material is sitting around in somebody's attic or basement. Do not let it become destroyed. It may be of significant help in the research for our Conference history.

You are invited to support the work of our Society by becoming a member. Dues are \$3.00 per person or \$5.00 a couple. Benjamin Abbott Life Memberships for individuals or churches are available for \$50. Dues money should be sent to the Financial Secretary, Mrs. Edna Molyneaux, 768 East Garden Road, Vineland, N.J. 08360.

Publications available from the Society are the *1792 Journal of the Rev. Richard Swain*. Copies can be ordered from Mrs. Molyneaux at \$2.50 postpaid. Two other resources available from the historian are *Services and Resources for Worship on Historic Occasions* and *Guidelines for Local Church Historians and Records and History Committees*. These are \$1.50 each.

This year our Conference hosted the Annual Meeting of the Commission on Archives and History of the Northeastern Jurisdiction. Meetings were held in St. Peter's Church, Ocean City. An all day tour

took us to Batsto, Pleasant Mills, Mays Landing, Head of the River, South Seaville Camp Grounds and historic Cape May.

Your interest and support in the work of the Society is greatly appreciated.

REV. ROBERT B. STEELMAN
Historian
207 Locust Avenue
West Long Branch, N.J. 07764

HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF THE
SOUTHERN NEW JERSEY ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF
THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

HISTORICAL SOCIETY OFFICERS

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<i>Library & Archives</i>	The Meckler Library Pennington School Pennington, N.J.



*Interior of the Second Church (1840) of the
First Mount Holly United Methodist Church.*